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DE RUEHMO #4480 2551233
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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3766
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0354

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/12/2017
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [BM](#) [RS](#)
SUBJECT: RUSSIA WILL CONSIDER UNSC MEETING ON BURMA, BUT
SAYS IT PREFERS ISSUE BE HANDLED ELSEWHERE

REF: STATE 125430

Classified By: Political M/C Alice G. Wells for reasons 1.4 (b/d).

¶1. (C) Russia will consider our request to convene a formal briefing of the UN Security Council by Special Envoy for Burma Gambari (reftel), but believes that the situation is an internal matter not appropriate for the UNSC, according to Alexey Semenikhin of the MFA Department of ASEAN Member States. Semenikhin told us on September 12 that the GOR does not have a position on the current crisis in Burma and that it should be left to the Burmese government to resolve the situation without foreign interference. Stressing that the GOR supports Gambari's mission to Burma, he questioned whether the Special Envoy could play a role in resolving the situation. Semenikhin reiterated the Russian position that Burma is not an international security issue and should be handled outside the UNSC.

¶2. (C) Semenikhin offered the view that the ongoing protests in Burma are the outgrowth of economic problems and not a true political crisis. He rejected the idea that the current government crack-down demonstrates the regime's opposition to genuine dialogue and pointed to Burma's National Convention and roadmap for political reform as evidence that the Burmese Generals are serious about allowing some level of democratic participation. The result will not be a western-style democracy, but there are many forms of democracy, especially in Southeast Asia. Semenikhin admitted that this will be a slow process, but one the international community must respect.
Burns